

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 were pending, claims 11 and 20-23 were withdrawn, claims 1, 2, 6-10, 12, 16, 17, and 19 stand rejected to, and claims 3, 5, 13-15, and 18 stand objected to. By virtue of this response, claims 4, 5, 11, 13, and 20-23 have been cancelled, claims 1, 6, 7, 12, 14, 15, and 18 have been amended, and new claims 24-26 have been added. The new claims and amendment to the claims are fully supported by the claims as originally presented; accordingly, no new matter has been added. Thus, claims 1-3, 6-10, 12, 14-19, and 24-26 are currently under consideration.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 3, 5, 13-15, and 18 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter.

As indicated herein, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the features of claim 5 (and intervening claim 4), which was indicated to include allowable subject matter. Additionally, Applicants have amended claim 12 to include the features of original claim 13, which was indicated to include allowable subject matter. Finally, Applicants have added new claim 24 that includes the features of original claims 1 and 3, of which claim 3 was indicated to include allowable subject matter.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 12, and 24 (and all claims depending therefrom) are now in condition for immediate allowance.

Claim Objections

Claims 7 and 18 stand objected to because of informalities detailed on page 2 of the Office Action. As indicated herein, claim 7 and 18 have been amended to correct the informalities; Applicants thank the Examiner for bringing these to their attention.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC §103

A. Claims 1, 4, and 6-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ichiyama (JP 2000-014079A) in view of Lee et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,339,515).

As indicated herein, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the features of original claims 4 and 5, which are indicted in the Office Action on page 5 to include allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 1, and dependent claims 2, 3, and 6-10 are now allowable over the cited art.

B. Claims 2, 12, 16, 17, and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hong et al (US 6,249,400) in view of Ichiyama and Lee et al.

As indicated herein, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the features of original claims 4 and 5, which are indicted in the Office Action on page 5 to include allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 1, and dependent claims 2, 3, and 6-10 are now allowable over the cited art.

Further, as indicated herein, Applicants have amended claim 12 to include the features of original claim 13, which are indicted in the Office Action on page 5 to include allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 12, and dependent claims 14-19 are now allowable over the cited art.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 146712017100. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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